

JUL 1 1925

# THE COMMONWEAL

*A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts,  
and Public Affairs.*

Wednesday, July 1, 1925

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## LET US MAKE PEACE

Carlton J. H. Hayes

## THE BOOMING BUREAUS

Aaron Hardy Ulm

## PHYSICIANS, POETS, AND SUICIDES

James J. Walsh

## FOUR GREAT RUSSIANS

John Ayscough

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## THE VALUES OF CONTENT

IT IS entertaining to wonder what might be the sentiments of Hamlet, the melancholy Dane, if he could go strap-hanging out of Chicago and come squarely face to face with one of those plump, rosy, twinkling little men who beam at their copies of *Woman's Wear* and rather like the rhythm of the jolting train. The brooding prince who bears the burden of all the rottenness of Denmark—the dapper salesperson who is pleased with his job and his literature! But to a large extent the contrast suggested here is really omnipresent. It is the gulf between the lonely philosopher who speculates on the mysteries of the soul and the great mob that scarcely realizes there is such a thing as soul; between the fiery idealist who dreams of toppling social systems and the jolly throng that spins so contentedly down the social groove; between the saint who reels with the sublimity of Divine light and the vast citizenry which yawns over the Sunday paper it has substituted for thinking. There is nothing to which the bulk of mankind clings so blindly and trustingly as to its philosophy of contentment. Whatever Stevenson and the sages may think, most folks are Elizabethan enough to hang a sign-board over their particular premises and label it *El Dorado*. We all love to roost on solid strips of inertia.

What can be said of the wisdom of that great class

which is satisfied to take the world as it is—that innumerable host of men and women who feel that theirs is the best baby, the best country, the best golf-club? Much has been written against comfortable minds and the prevalence of the spiritual siesta. Of recent years satirists have found the theme profitable, and at least three titles of opprobrium have been added to the general vocabulary. But though contentment is not the germ of great irony or ecstasy, it is, when wisely considered, the yeast with which many real social virtues can be baked. To “take mine ease at mine inn,” for instance, is—like the nightly study of the stars—a way of discovering the great tranquillity of the universe. Who but a contented mortal can find the key to those pleasures of the cuisine and the cellar which are among the noblest creations of human art? The grumbling revolutionary is not a fit man to trace the epic differences between Vouvray and Vichy, nor have the mumbling logicians ever made the proper deductions from a savory platter of escargots. Of all the works of literature, it is the cook-book which has contributed most to domestic tranquillity and the general *savoir vivre*. There are excellent reasons why an honest historian should rate Schopenhauer lower than *sauterne*.

It is not so fortuitous as it may seem to take the culinary arts as a symbol for something that is



pretty largely missing from our time. The great democratic novelist of today is Dostoevsky; the great democratic novelist of yesterday was Dickens. The difference between these two men is not one of purpose or scope. Both were aflame with a Christian vision of social charity, both had shouted and wept over "the secret Scripture of the poor." But Dostoevsky is the uneasy, groping, shuddering voice of a country from which the virtue of popular contentment had fled, a country in which there was literally and figuratively almost no food. Dickens, though he knew the bitter meaning of starvation, spoke in the name of a mob that still kept the tradition of feasting and even cherished memories of a banquet infinitely more sublime, in the holy peace and fullness of which one might hold communion with the Christ.

A rambling comment on contentment should, however, avoid philosophers and keep on buttonholing the ordinary citizen. We shall therefore look hastily at the matter as an economic thing, and see how it affects that part of life which deals with getting bread. There is nothing more banal than the typical go-getter, whose complex is a sport-model and a sense of his own triumphant importance; there is nothing more pitiful than the white-collared little fellow who drums away his life reverently crediting the write-ups which explain how the quondam poor boy, by honesty, industry and working over-time, got to be the president of the corporation. But certainly also there is nothing more banal and pitiful than the victims of talk about "systems" who fret, starve and grind their lives away for a dream of an economic ideal which can never be realized and which would kill if it did come true. Truth must be sought in a contentedness far removed from the minds we have just catalogued. One day a poor traveler through France overheard from the window of the room he had engaged for the night, a hot debate on social wrongs and social revolution. When various persons had their say, a girl's voice rang with conviction through the dawn—"Moi, j'aime bien travailler et bien mourir." To do one's work well and to die well—that is an application of the philosophy of contentment to the economic basis of life which would not, indeed, remedy all evils, but which could provide a solid pathway along which progress might be easier.

But in economics, as in everything else, a good principle is nowadays blown furiously about by the winds. We are harassed by a continuous impact of footless ideals. Perhaps it is even true that the very ability to think is worn away by the attrition of things to think about. Our aim seems to be not a steady amassing of a philosophy of life, or even of a civilization, but rather the ceaseless filing of the teeth of the saw of discontent. "We have never made a statue worthy of our dreams," is a statement which, as Stevenson uses it, contains a goodly amount of social wisdom, but which is dangerous when used as an argument for smashing what sculpture we have acquired. No, a

democratic commonwealth cannot expect to accomplish anything in the art of government or civilization unless it takes for granted the value of work that has been done. Tradition is the world's spiritual principal; progress is the interest reaped by succeeding generations.

If, after thousands of years during which the impact of Divinity in the conduct of human affairs has been reverently taken for granted by the wisest and best men, we are no nearer truth in our general outlook upon life, then there is little hope that humanity can ever reach a safe harbor or a holy rest. The critic—the professional philosopher of discontent—has his place, but he is a finisher and not a builder. When the great mass of the populace manifests a tendency to be satisfied with the status quo, it is only—though sometimes unwisely—professing its faith in an obvious truth. It is doing unconsciously what the wise must do with reflection: it is accepting the graves of its forefathers not only as monuments, but also as mile-stones.

When one stops to think earnestly, it becomes apparent that the chief reason for the present unsettlement of mind is a religious reason. People who have no creed are not contented people, they are simply loose, "un-bound" people. A man who has not yet been fed with the knowledge of Divinity is as badly starved as a baby in a milkless, motherless town. The source of true contentment in the human soul was pointed out so well in the immortal recipe of Dante that we can do no better than quote it again—"In His will is our peace." The sentence does not imply a slovenly mental condition or a calm acquiescence in fate. His will is ours to establish, ours to uphold in battle and in the sweat that brings bread. But knowing it, we form part of the endless commonwealth of men who for ages have understood the rightness of Charlemagne's sword and the beauty of Bernard's speech; we join hands with the builders of the mighty spiritual democracy which our fathers raised partly from their dream; and there is no problem which leaves us hopeless, for the very reason that there can be for us, ultimately, no such thing as hopelessness.

Yet seen even so, contentment needs philosophy. We are so ready to slumber, to forget, to make holiday. And therefore it will be a good thing to set over and against the great dictum of Dante the no less towering phrase of Newman—"To be at ease is to be unsafe." A classic calm in art, literature, or in life is not a human thing; it is a cold, beautiful, dead thing.

We do not love the earth unless our hands are stained with its soil and the pollen of its flowers; we do not love men unless we feel them, not lukewarmly but either hot or cold; and it is likely that we have not known God unless we are conscious of the dismal moments of His absence.

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## THE COMMONWEAL

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### WEEK BY WEEK

JUDGE KENNEDY has brought on a judicial earthquake of some dimensions, by clearing the lease of Teapot Dome from charges of fraud and collusion. If he is right, months of sensational charges and the grueling of many witnesses, have resulted in nothing more satisfactory than a snipe-hunt on a frosty night. If he is wrong, it will require two years or more to enable the Supreme Court to point out his mistake. Meanwhile, the public will continue to detect the odor of oil on the national clothes. The difficulty which is basic in all matters such as this, is that of putting the evidence into a form which will permit the formation of a reasonable public opinion. Whatever we may feel about Teapot Dome, we must be content to let the courts know the situation for us. But the question of wrapping the management and sale of the public property in a cloud of suspicious secrecy, is another matter. The American people will not hasten to accept Judge Kennedy's statement that the exercise of Congressional power to regulate the control of government property, may involve "that in the exercise of that power, it may by appropriate legislative authority, delegate officers of the executive department to handle government property in an unrestricted way, and in accordance with a vested discretion."

THE abuses to which such a principle might lead—even if the perfect innocence of the Sinclair and Doheny oil leases should finally be proved—are far too great for the public safety. If such a law as that of 1920 did actually turn over to navy officers and

the Secretary of the Interior, natural resources which are almost incalculably valuable, we believe that the law was about as unbusiness-like as any on record. It virtually creates a closed corporation, the books of which are delicately camouflaged from the directors—i. e., the public—and the motives actuating which can only be a private secret. It would be difficult to think of a more effective means of shaking faith in the national government, or a poorer way to safeguard the national wealth.

LORD SHAFTESBURY'S announcement to the English Church Union, of which he is the president, that relationships are steadily growing more cordial between the Anglican and the Eastern Orthodox churches, can be accepted as an indication that the roots of schism are gradually withering. Christendom would profit much from a unification of these bodies, even if they should then determine—at least for the time being—to hold out against Rome. Lord Shaftesbury, however, also indicated that the ancient antipathy to the Papacy is weakening, by approving wholeheartedly the conversations at Malines, and predicting that they would be continued for many years to come. In two important respects, the English Union itself has established principles of far-reaching significance—it reaffirmed the indissolubility of marriage, and it seemed unafraid, on the whole, to contemplate a drift towards "the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Mass." Though many Anglicans are quite as anti-papistical as ever, it is really engrossing to note the modifications which English ecclesiastical opinion has introduced during the past few years. Recent books issued by the S. P. C. K. do homage to the Virgin Mary in a way that would gratify Saint Bernard; and historical learning, as it is carried on at Cambridge and elsewhere, has so thoroughly altered views of the religious revolution that the old-time animus has practically disappeared. These are all encouraging signs—even if they do not, as yet, warrant the belief that a vast re-cementing of Christendom is to be the work of the near future.

THE recent conference at Malines is of particular interest. The representatives of the English Established church and of the Catholic Church, decided not to issue any statement until the official joint declaration shall be issued. Meanwhile, however, there is an optimistic ring to the remarks made by Cardinal Mercier to a writer for *La Vie Catholique*—"As to the conferences at Malines, it is difficult for me at the present moment to say very much about them for the press, as we have arranged to observe a complete silence while we wait for the official declaration which we shall make in common. Nevertheless, I can say that I am highly pleased with these new conferences, and would emphasize the importance of two points that cannot be overlooked. First, the significant fact

that for the fourth time, men eminent in the High Church party of English Protestantism have come, with the approval of the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, to spend these days in the archdiocese of Malines to meet Catholic theologians, and in friendly spirit examine with them the problem of the reunion of the churches."

"THESE discussions have taken place in a perfect spirit of loyalty and cordiality," the Cardinal continued, "and in a spirit of faith that has touched me deeply. The rest remains with God. Faith is a gift of God, and a return to Catholic unity is above all an effect of grace." When questioned by the interviewer as to whether there would be further conferences at Malines, the Cardinal replied—"Without doubt. It is now established that there shall be regular reunions, and those who took part in last week's meetings, separated without even imagining that it would be possible not to continue the conversations. Please God, they will occur again next year at the archbishopric."

ONE of the most important exhibitions of the season in New York, at the Grand Central Art Galleries, has opened so late that it may be missed by many picture-lovers. It consists of some fifty-six masterly works by the Swedish painter Anders Zorn—many of them the finest of his production, and some of them of a merit extraordinary in modern production. Anders Zorn represents the very soul of an heroic school of Sweden. He is one of the last of the great Goths of the age of King Oscar, Prinz Eugen, Selma Lagerlof and Branting—and in spite of his descent from Bavarian Germans, through his Dalecarlian mother, he represents the very bone and marrow of a fine Swedish tradition. Notable among these exhibits which verify the view that in America we have too long confined our admiration of Zorn to his well-disseminated etchings, is the great masterpiece in color called *Marget*—a work which can hold its own beside the finest work of the old masters of portraiture. There is also his oft-reproduced painting, *King's Kari*, and a remarkable Venetian study entitled—*In My Gondola*. There are other remarkable paintings beside the well-known *Breadmaking* and *Rowing to Church*, such as *Ida at the Window*, and *Christmas Matins in Mora*.

THE ceremonies held last week to commemorate the one-thousandth anniversary of the Rhineland, took place, after all, without the presence of President Hindenburg. Despite French assurances that he had nothing to fear from the army in occupation, the tough old warrior displayed that discretion which is a legitimate part of proven valor, and contented himself with a ringing message, setting the "day of deliverance" for a near date. For Field Marshal and President Hindenburg, however inconvenient it may be to

recall it, is more than the titular head of the German republic. He is a very considerable figure in a long international panel of "war-guilty," accused among other matters of civil deportations which revived in modern and scientific fashion the slave battues of Egypt and Assyria.

IT is rather a pity that the Marshal did not take his courage in his hand and decide to come—if only to enforce a moral which the world would be no worse for having brought to its attention. Of all the foolish gestures which the allied powers permitted themselves in the rapture of release, perhaps most fatuous was the attempt to fasten responsibility on the "higher-ups" in Germany. It was doomed from the start, not so much on account of the material difficulties in its way, as because it ran directly counter to the instincts and interests of the very class that would have had to enforce it—the Olympians who sit above the clouds, and make good and bad weather for petty humanity. History affords us a long list of splendid culprits, splendidly punished. But unless the principle upon which our world is governed today changes very sharply, it is probable we have seen the last of them.

THIS principle may be roughly defined as one providing that honor and dishonor shall take diametrically opposite courses—that when it is a question of praise and reward, the delegation of credit shall ascend from the bottom to the top, whereas, in matters of blame and punishment, responsibility shall run from top to bottom. The immunity of upper social categories from a personal accounting to the state for their acts, is a curious by-product of ten centuries of progress in democracy and constitutional liberty. But that it exists, and cries aloud from the house-tops, no one doubts—least of all those who take advantage of it. Sir William Butler, that brave soldier, thinker and Catholic, pilloried it in no uncertain voice twenty years ago, in his famous report upon the commissariat scandals of the South African War. But Pascal had noted it before Sir William. Unwilling, or unable, to strengthen the hands of justice he tells us the only way a materialized society can save its face, is to justify strength.

THE beatification of Father Jogues and his martyred companions has given new interest to the question of the treatment by various nationals of the aboriginal inhabitants of America, and correspondents have been airing their views. A letter in the New York Times from Senor Munoz-Tebar protests in lively language against the charges of cruelty levelled against the Spanish settlers in the southern half of the continent. Senor Tebar lays pardonable stress on the fact that, however terrible this record may be, the mere fact that Indians exist and prosper in South America and that their blood has been incorporated



with that of the conquerors, whereas in the United States they are a vanishing remnant, is the best rejoinder to any charges coming from the north.

THERE does not seem much to be gained at this date by recriminations and comparisons based upon race or religion. To paraphrase a famous saying, there is "discredit enough for all" when we look back upon the colonial record of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As the Times very honestly remarks, in its editorial comment on the correspondence, it would be well, before descanting on Spanish cruelties, to speculate what might have happened here had gold instead of pines and hemlocks, greeted the Pilgrim Fathers. One cannot but be struck, all the same, by a certain coldness of heart and lack of apostolic fervor, on the part of the English settlers, towards the poor wandering tribes they found in their path. Except for a few shining lights such as Roger Williams, the record is one of unimaginative meanness rather than actual cruelty. Cotton Mather, that eminent divine and witch-hunter, congratulates New England, in his *Magnalia*, on the providence that is quietly wiping out their dusky neighbors by disease and misery. "If ever those rattlesnakes should stir again," he writes in his account of Sir William Phipps, "the most scrupulous person in the world must own that it must be the most unexceptionable piece of justice in the world for to extinguish them." This sweet sentiment was probably shared and put into practice by many a French and Spanish soldier, explorer, and prospector. It would be hard, one fancies, to duplicate it out of the mouth of any ordained minister at Montreal or Mexico City.

THE North American Indian, anyhow, is a baffling study. The more we consider him, the more he eludes us. His crass materialism contrasted with the strange purity of his religious beliefs, his stoical courage, his devilish cruelty, which makes our blood run cold and hot at the distance of 300 years, the respect shown by him to female captives, so puzzling that historians have assigned it to a racial "tabu," last and not least, his absolute incompatibility with any imaginable form of settled civilization, combine to make him an ethnological enigma. After all, it was this incompatibility which was his ruin. Side by side with it, minor differences of treatment accorded him by this race or that tend to sink into secondary significance.

THE remarks of Lord Lee of Fareham on the damage being done to our prestige by the exhibit abroad of the more tawdry variety of American film were severe, but comment on this side generally seems to admit their justice, even where it suspects that something more lay behind Lord Lee's strictures than vicarious anxiety for the American good name. The

"trouble with the movies" goes very much further back than most critics carry it. Some day a really illuminating study on its beginnings may be written. It should prove entertaining and instructive reading. But it is no secret that the men into whose hands the industry fell when it was an infant affair did not belong to the class that would have handled it had its commercial possibilities been realized at the start. They were men, as a rule, already engaged in amusing rather than instructing or elevating the public, Great White Way impresarios and concessionaires, bout promoters, the "condottieri" and camp kettle swingers of the world of entertainment. They knew from long experience, not so much what the public wants, for that might have been difficult and unprofitable to give, but, what is vastly more important, what the public will stand for and pay for. Wealth and importance have waxed, talent has been hired wherever talent has been for sale, but the early character stamped upon the industry has never been effaced. The most obvious result of the millions expended upon it where hundreds once were grudged has been to accentuate the vulgarity of its appeal and the exorbitance of its incident.

OF Pierre Louys, who died recently in Paris at the comparatively early age of fifty-five, it may be said that no single writer in this generation, not even Anatole France, has done more to further that backflow of pagan blood which Peguy, shortly before his heroic death, pointed out as an imminent danger to our civilization. Member of an old Protestant family, the master of an impeccable style, and literally saturated with classical lore, Louys devoted his talents to a ceaseless glorification of physical love, which at times attained a sort of frenzy. His popularity was enormous. Of his *Aphrodite*, which even a critic so immune to religious influences as Remy de Gourmont described as "a manual of the flesh," and a plea for "romantic sensuality," 125,000 copies were sold within a year.

"SENSUALITY," the young master proclaimed, "is the mysterious but necessary creative source of intellectual development." The aphorism did not save his intelligence from perceiving that progressive loss of human dignity was the result of taking this counsel too literally. So Chrysis in *Aphrodite*, and Concha in *La Femme et le Pantin*, implore their lovers for blows and bruises. "Oh! the good beating!" In another classical phantasy a royal edict sends the subjects of good king "Pausole" nude upon the city streets. The idea that an obscure sadism—a "cruelty complex," lies at the root of physical passion, was not Louys's discovery. But no one used the theme with greater relish than he, and no salt, it may be pointed out, is being so exploited by the sorry crew of writers in our own tongue who make the seasoning of banal erotic denouements their specialty.

## THE SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

**D**RAMATIC and masculine in death, as he had always been in life, Senator La Follette has been given the respect—even if he could not wholly capture the love—of his fellow citizens everywhere. What the man's career has meant can easily be discerned if we reflect that there is no other person in American public life whose passing would deservedly receive the same kind of attention and consideration. With him there has gone a time, a political attitude, and even a party, which has been of integral importance.

La Follette's rise to fame is itself a lesson in history. His law-practice, unsuccessful and poorly prepared for, was only a means of getting about among men who were interested in the affairs of Wisconsin. Very soon he proved his magnetism, his really ruthless honesty, his excellence as a public speaker. People listened to "Bob" in every one of the string of little cities and county-seats where a lively, frontier-like public conscience was forming, and they were glad to back him in his gripping government of the state. The great tilt with the railroads, his first stride towards national prominence, proved that La Follette was not merely the enemy of vested interests but an enemy who studied every nook and knothole of the controversy. He began then to look into what was being done in other parts of the world to alleviate social distress and economic dishonesty; he gave his state a code of industrial legislation which has since been copied by almost every other commonwealth; and during the years immediately preceding his death he was as eager as a young man for information about coöperative marketing and production. It was because he was thus abreast of good experimental government everywhere that the people who vote in Wisconsin were so willing to let him pocket their public business.

The Senator's national career was stormy. On many questions he stood so noticeably alone that it became easy to term him an agitator rather than what he actually was—a restless constructive thinker. His dramatic protest against the declaration of war upon Germany was invested with the horror of *lèse majesté*, there was talk of impeachment, and odium became the sole reward of his frankness. Later on, the insurgent movement followed his lead. This movement cannot be understood unless we remember that the Northwest is not a district of great financial or industrial combinations, but a land of small farmers and business-men who believe stoutly in freedom from the pressure of money centres. When insurgency became the third party, it revealed a fundamental incapacity for organization on a large scale. There was merely an accretion of stormy malcontents who had little in common with La Follette and the Northwest. It is difficult to see how the party can hold together without the Senator's leadership.

Other aspects of La Follette's policy were certainly dubious enough. Had he known more of the law, he probably would not have made his notorious attack on the Supreme Court. Had he devoted less energy to equipping his state with a democratized system of voting, which has compromised with evil rather than uprooted it, he might have had more for the great undertaking of coöperation which his leadership could have aided signally. But he was a man with enough ideas to equip several dozen ordinary congressmen and enough force to hold his position in the face of odds that would have buried anybody else.

## COLLEGE ATHLETICS

**T**HE husky gridiron hero and the fleet youth who can circle a track a second faster than anybody else, are among the most puzzling acquisitions to modern college life. Gone are the days when a laurel wreath and a pindaric ode gave the brawny champion all he cared for in this world. Rivalry and advertising value have placed upon the prospective winner's back, in far too many instances, a little sign which says—"How much am I offered?" The result is what is termed professionalism—a malady which renders it impossible to impose scholastic standards upon the heads of sporting-page idols. But the various boards of athletic control have been doing their best, and in some cases are deserving of medals for fortitude and righteousness. The report recently prepared by Professor Moran for the American Association of University Professors implied this, while firmly making an effort to place the responsibility for failure where it belongs. "The board in control of athletics at best," the report stated, "can be only partially successful when called upon to enforce eligibility requirements in the face of active opposition on the part of undergraduates, alumni and associations of business and professional men. . . . I believe that the alumni have for the most part a correct attitude towards the regulation of intercollegiate athletics. There are many individuals, however, and some informal groups, who are doing all they can to debauch the whole athletic situation. Some of them have been successful financially and now think it a patriotic duty, as well as a pleasure, to hire athletes to attend their alma mater." A plea for an enlightened public opinion is appended to these realistic remarks. But it would seem that public opinion is fundamentally interested in the score. It may put its tongue in its cheek and speculate about the price of a team and its coach, but it comes to see and place its bets on a winning outfit. If public opinion can remedy the situation, may it be cheered and exalted. But it would really seem that if you are going to get into intercollegiate athletics at all, you must be willing to accept it on its face value—as an appendage to modern mass education, designed to boost the enrollment and secure headlines.



# LET US MAKE PEACE

By CARLTON J. H. HAYES

**I**S IT true that Americans are indifferent to the need of assuring international peace? Are they simply bored by mention of World Court, League of Nations, outlawry of war, and international relations in general? I am told as much by numerous editors and publicists, who declare that our fellow-countrymen absolutely will not read, much less think, about foreign affairs—and that the most certain way of diminishing the circulation of a periodical would be for such a periodical to undertake a campaign in behalf of the adherence of the United States to the League of Nations.

The League has been dragged too deeply in the mud of partisan politics; it is as yet perhaps too much the creation and guarantee of the selfish interests of the victorious powers in the recent great war; and from what I know and observe of my fellow-citizens, I am not optimistic about the rise of any popular movement which in the near future will compel our government formally to become a party to the League.

But the League is only one aspect of the problem of international peace. Shortly there will be added a conflict in this country as to whether we should adhere, with or without reservations, to the Permanent Court of International Justice. Presidents Harding and Coolidge, and national conventions alike of the Democratic and of the Republican party, are on record in favor of the Court—Senator Borah is outspoken against it. Even now the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America—that great and influential organ of American Protestantism—and innumerable women's organizations and such study-groups as the Foreign Policy Association, are engaged in a propaganda of press, pulpit and platform, in order to secure popular backing for the friends of the Court in the United States Senate. On the other hand, many Protestants and professional pacifists, and such an esteemed philosopher as Professor John Dewey, are flooding the country with pronouncements in support of Senator Borah's substitute for America's adherence to the World Court—the outlawry of war. In the light of the discussion already proceeding, in which Senator Borah happens to be the immediate storm-centre, and which is likely to become greatly intensified by next winter, when the Senate is scheduled to act, it seems hardly possible that most Americans can remain totally indifferent to a consideration of the bases and props of international amity.

It is not my purpose—not at least my present purpose—to champion the outlawry of war, or the World Court (I am extremely sceptical about any single panacea for the ills of international war) but I would

urge every American citizen of sound mind and good will to give some thought and study to the most important and pressing problem, or congeries of problems, with which his country is confronted—with which Christendom is faced. Do we understand what havoc was wrought by the last great war—what vaster havoc is certain to be wrought by another great war? Do we appreciate the special causes of international war in our age—the anarchistic system of jealous, selfish, sovereign states—the intolerant, boastful sentiment of nationalism—the economic rivalries, coupled with abuses of capitalism and with a philosophy of might and mania for bigness—the competition in national armaments—the tortuous conduct of secret diplomacy? Do we inform ourselves of what has been done to deal with the causes of war? Do we reach reasoned convictions as to what more must be done in order to establish effectively international peace? Sound information and healthy interest must accompany each other, and both must precede conviction.

The problem, in its manifold ramifications, is not the concern alone of any political party or racial group or religious body in the United States. It is the vital concern of all American citizens. And yet, by a curious irony of circumstance, both in information of international affairs, and in interest in the problem of peace, Catholic Americans, as a whole, lag behind their Protestant fellow-countrymen, and lag far behind their own European co-religionists. I said, "by a curious irony of circumstance," because of all people who do not, and yet should, concern themselves with fundamental international problems, Catholic Americans stand foremost. Their Church is international in foundation, in tradition, in organization, and in spirit. Its gospel is international and humanitarian. Its teaching is of those very virtues upon which, it is universally admitted, the future peace of the world must rest—humility, justice, and charity. Its distinctive unity and universality, as well as its mission, are endangered by war, and by the causes of war, to a much greater degree than are the localism and separateness of any Protestant church. And if civilization receives irreparable hurt from another world war, it will be preëminently that civilization which has received life and being from the Catholic Church.

There is no doubt of the attitude of the sovereign Pontiff on the whole subject. The consistorial allocution of Leo XIII, on February 11, 1889—his address to the Sacred College on April 11, 1899, and the correspondence of his Secretary of State on the occasion of the Peace Conference at The Hague, contain definite and pertinent instructions. The documents thence-

forth multiply—letters and addresses too numerous to mention, culminating in the encyclicals, *Pacem* of Benedict XV, and *Ubi Arcano Dei* of Pius XI. There is no doubt of the serious efforts now being put forth, in response to these papal appeals, on the part of considerable groups of European Catholics. Can there be doubt of the response of American Catholics?

It is significant that the sovereign Pontiffs have not confined their utterances to pleas for individual morality, though they clearly recognize, just as all Catholics are bound to recognize, that any real improvement in international relations must be preceded and attended by an ever-widening individual practice of humility, justice, and charity, and by an augmenting application of these private virtues to public life. The Pontiffs go further, and urge organized action toward specific goals. For example, Pius X wrote to the papal delegate in the United States, on June 11, 1911, concerning the activities of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—

"Truly, to promote the concord of minds, to restrain the warlike instincts, to remove the dangers of war, and at the same time to allay the dreads of what has commonly been called the armed peace, is a very noble enterprise—and everything which tends toward this result, even without attaining immediately and completely the desired end, constitutes nevertheless an effort glorious for its authors and conducive to the public welfare."

Even more specific was Benedict XV in his famous letter of August 1, 1917—

"The fundamental point must be that the material force of arms give way to the moral force of right, whence a just agreement of all upon the simultaneous and reciprocal decrease of armaments, according to rules and guarantees to be established, is the necessary measure for the maintenance of public order in every state; then, taking the place of arms, the institution of arbitration, with its high pacifying function, according to rules to be drawn in concert and under sanctions to be determined against any state which would decline either to refer international questions to arbitration or to accept its awards."

In brief, the papal program, as outlined by Benedict XV and Pius XI, includes—the establishment of a true association of nations; the general and reciprocal reduction of armaments; and the compulsory arbitration of international disputes. It is a magnificent program, to the realization of which Catholics in America, as well as in Europe, can devote themselves with idealism and enthusiasm. It is, moreover, no narrowly sectarian program: its appeal is to all men of good will, and on its several planks Catholics can stand shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-citizens. Finally, it is a practical program, in the sense that it puts into definite form the desires and strivings of an enormous number of war-wearied people throughout the world.

But the papal program will not carry far in the United States, unless Catholic Americans acquire some knowledge of, and interest in, the actual League of Nations as it exists today—in the practical working of the Permanent Court of International Justice—in the proposed protocol for the establishment of compulsory arbitration—and in the various pending projects for reduction of armaments. Nor will it carry far here, unless Catholic Americans reach honest convictions on the major point of how best to square the papal ideals with the present institutions and practice of international affairs, and then co-operate loyally and intelligently with like-minded persons—whether these latter be Catholic or not.

Thus, Catholic Americans owe it to their country, and to their Church immediately, to acquaint themselves with the World Court and with Mr. Borah's scheme for the outlawry of war—and then to work zealously, in alliance with existing organizations, for whatever action of the United States (it may be adherence to the World Court—it may be the outlawry of war—it may be both) seems best calculated to realize the Catholic program of international concord. This they must do as American citizens.

### *The Other Rider*

As I ride by the sea I think of you,  
Who are a lover of horses too,  
And trees,  
And seas,  
Such scenes as these.  
Across a continent sitting there  
Busy and still, in an office chair  
Sober and calm and dignified,  
But longing to ride,  
As I ride,  
Beside  
The swirl and sway  
Of the waves today  
Out where the grey gulls drift and play  
And the green sea buds to a flower of spray,  
White and sweet!  
My horse's feet  
Are wet with the sea where the dark sand slips  
Under our flight. There are little ships  
Out where the sea and sky take hands,  
Ships that are sailing to foreign lands!  
I shout! I race! Life is sweet, sweet, sweet!  
For on a phantom horse with feet  
That splash in the waves I'm seeing you  
Here by the cool sea, riding, too!

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

### *The Parapet of Notre Dame*

Paris lay hushed beneath the midday sun,  
Her evil hid in smile's oblivion.  
Suddenly I heard the gargoyles' jeering cries  
Answered beneath by carven angels' sighs.

CHARLES J. QUIRK.



# THE BOOMING BUREAUS

By AARON HARDY ULM

**H** E WAS a clear-cut, candid, busy man of affairs in Washington, on business with the government.

"Congress bothering you?" he was asked.

"No."

"The courts?"

"No."

"Here to see the President, or one of the secretaries or under-secretaries in the departments?"

"No; I'm here to see a few of the real rulers of the country. They are the chaps who run the bureaus. Nine-tenths of the government's interest in me, or my business, is exercised by them."

He no doubt was a bit disgruntled. But the writer took occasion to make similar inquiries of the next eleven visitors on business at the capital, whom he met. Nine of them gave virtually the same answer. Each was looking after a matter in the hands of a bureau. He made inquiries of a like nature concerning the work of the greatly increased number of resident Washingtonians, of the lawyer-type, who live by representing outsiders in transactions with the government—a force made up largely of former employees and officials of the government, even persons who once were in the Cabinet, or the Senate. And he found that their work has to do in like proportion with the bureaus.

What bureaus? Well, it would be easy to name a few of the biggest, the busiest, and most powerful ones. But it is curiously impossible to name them all. One can't state even how many there are; for nobody knows, and there are no certain means of finding them out.

Irate pioneers in Alaska have been unable definitely to figure out the number of Washington bureaus that share the powers of government as applied to that far-away land. About the best they can do is to say that there are sixty-odd of them. There are only about 15,000 white persons in Alaska. The powers exercised over their affairs by sixty-odd federal bureaus, are only incidental—although circumstances give to some of them there a potency not common to operations in the states. But the same bureaus exercise, in general, like authority over the affairs of the 110,000,000 folk in the contiguous portions of the country.

And a hundred or more additional ones likewise have to do with affairs in the states.

Recently the writer went through the record with the view of finding how many, all told, there are. But in the end he had to resort to the expediency of estimating. He placed the number at approximately one hundred and said nothing about it, for he doubted

if anybody would believe that there could be so many. Herbert Hoover comes along, however, and says—

"On the executive side of the federal government, we have grown to have more than 200 bureaus, boards and commissions."

The problem of enumeration is confused at the beginning by multifarious nomenclatures. The boards and commissions are bureaus, often super-bureaus, and there are "offices" and "units" and "divisions," which also are bureaus. And there are bureaus within bureaus—and there are bureaus that are such in scarcely more than name. Many are only groupings of convenience. Some have practically no power; others have all but unlimited power. The responsibility of some of them—to heads of departments, to the President, to Congress, or to the public—is clear and active; with others, there is, in effect, no responsibility to anybody or anything.

Their powers, on the whole, are equally beyond measuring, for in many cases they are whatever the bureaus themselves want to make them.

It, too, is hard to trace their growth—which, on the whole, has been gradual, but at times rapid—and frequently unapparent at the time. The record, however, is virtually one of growth only. Some students of the subject say that no ground ever gained by the federal government bureaus ever has been fully surrendered. One finds now practically all of the gains made by reason of recent war-need preserved—though in several cases the survivals are only rudimentary.

Quantitative comprehension of recent permanent growth may be had from a couple of illustrations.

If you take the issues of the Congressional Directory, put forth respectively in January, 1906, and January, 1925, and turn to the parts of each that have to do with administrative branches of the government, you will find—

Epitomes of the organizations—that is, the names, titles and addresses of administrative officials of consequence, occupy—in the 1906 directory, thirty-two pages; in the 1925 directory, forty-five pages. The recitals of duties imposed on the various establishments occupy—in the 1906 directory, thirty-four pages; in the 1925 directory, ninety-two pages.

It thus would seem that duties, or powers, have expanded more than personnel; but the divergence is accounted for in some part by the fact that, for space reasons, the former is not set forth so amply in the last, as in the first directory.

A sub-comparison drawn from the foregoing, illustrates a significant tendency of this growth—

Epitomes of directing personnel of federal government administrative establishments, listed in the Con-

gressional Directory as "independent and miscellaneous," fill—in the 1906 directory, seven pages; in the 1925 directory, seventeen pages. The recitals of duties performed by "independent and miscellaneous" establishments fill—in the 1906 directory, five pages; in the 1925 directory, thirty-nine pages.

The government has expanded, via "independent and miscellaneous" agencies, at a much greater rate than through the executive departments—though during the period reviewed, two new departments were created.

These agencies of government are the ones which lie outside the jurisdictions of Cabinet officials. Several of them, such as the Veterans' Bureau, the Federal Trade Commission, the General Accounting Office, the Interstate Commerce Commission, are of immense importance. Technically, they are directly responsible to the President, or to Congress. Most of them are group-controlled, as against the rule of one-man-control that prevails in the departments. That is, instead of responsibility for their conduct lying upon a flesh and blood individual, who might be praised or blamed, it rests upon a rather fleshless and bloodless board or commission—made up, it is true, of individuals, but whose personalities usually are merged to the point of obscurity with the group.

Though rated as belonging to the executive branch of the government, several of these establishments exercise powers belonging to all three basic branches—the judicial, and the legislative, as well as the administrative. Within bounds, but frequently wide ones, they make what amounts to law. Then they both judge and administer the law which they make. This runs clearly in the face of Montesquieu's dictum—around which our Constitution is supposed to have been built—that "there can be no liberty where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same persons," or when "the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers."

Both of the fore-going attributes represent comparatively recent departures, and ones that may be of great significance.

"When our forefathers conceived this great plan of government," said Herbert Hoover recently, "they held that legislation required the meeting of scores of minds of equal authority, and that judicial decision likewise required the meeting of many minds through appeals and final decision, by a whole bench of judges. But they were no less emphatic that administration must be a single-headed responsibility."

This last was the outcome of rather bitter and disillusioning experience. The confederation under which the Revolution occurred, was almost exclusively a bureau government. There was not even a single executive head of the nation. For a long time there were no ministers, even of the sort now represented by Cabinet officials. Instead, there were boards of war, and of finance, and of admiralty, with committees of

foreign affairs and commerce. The result was next to no civil government at all.

In the midst of the Revolutionary War, a change was found to be vitally necessary. In the place of boards and committees, single ministers—like Robert Morris, who was put in charge of finances—were entrusted with high administrative functions.

The fear that the danger of autocracy and tyranny might adhere to one-man responsibility outlived the Revolution. But it failed to dominate the Constitutional Convention, wherein the views of Alexander Hamilton and others, who argued for individual authority and responsibility in the executive branch of the government, prevailed. And these views dominated, until, within recent times, the development of the administrative part of the government.

There were only a few instances, prior to the Civil War, of either independent or board-controlled bureaus being set up in the government. For a while the navy was administered by a board. But as with other early experiments of that kind, a change to one-man direction ultimately was made. Independent establishments usually were departments without Cabinet rank—such as was for long the Post-Office department and the Attorney General's office, which is now the Department of Justice.

It was in 1883 that the first notable step was taken in the direction of independent and board-controlled bureau government. That was in the establishment of the Civil Service Commission. This was followed, in 1887, by the establishment of the Interstate Commerce Commission. These since have been added to numerous—notably within the last dozen years. Many of the bureaus within the departments were expanded and others created.

The federal establishment is now predominately a bureau government. Despite the President's still great power, despite Congress's jealousy of its prerogatives, despite the augmented volume of work transacted by the federal courts, the majority of the average citizen's contacts with the government as a ruling institution, is through the bureaus.

Is this bureaucracy? It is. It isn't altogether the objectionable kind of bureaucracy. Even bureaucracy has its good, as well as its bad, side.

On its good side are continuity, expertness, and reliability—by no means in perfect form, but beyond what ordinarily is yielded by other systems.

On its bad side are absence of effective responsibility to anybody or anything, a "caste-like separation from civil society," a remoteness and security from the ordinary ebb and flow of public opinion, an all but invincible power of self-perpetuation and expansion.

Presidents come and go, the average duration of Cabinet members is only a few years, the complexion of Congress may change every two years, or oftener. But those who run the bureaus go on, like the brook, forever; individuals drop out and new ones come in;



but there is scarce change other than that which follows along with the processes of time.

This is particularly true of those that are "independent and miscellaneous." There is no Cabinet member, looming clearly on the horizon, via which they may be reached.

One, the General Accounting office—which, in passing on the validity of expenditures, can control measurably every executive operation of the government—is independent even of the President, and claims to be independent of the courts. Its head is appointed for a term of fifteen years, and is removable only by Congress and for serious offense.

But with that one, there is a tangibly flesh and blood head which can be—as it is—pummeled or adored. With others, there are only intangible heads. For instance, one hears much of McCarl, the energetic chief of the General Accounting office—but who ever hears of—and who can name—the individuals who wield the vast powers of the Federal Reserve Board, of the Horticultural Board, of the Interstate Commerce Commission, or of the Federal Power Commission?

Into the hands of such impersonal agencies, the expanded powers of government have been shunted in enormous measure during recent years.

"Every conceivable thing relating to human activity is being given over to bureaus administered from Washington," declared Senator William E. Borah of Idaho recently. "No political party seems willing to stand against this subtle revolution, this un-American and undemocratic program."

"These commissions and agencies far removed from the people, neither elected nor responsible to them, continually reach out for more power and authority," wrote Judge Martin B. Rosenberry of the Wisconsin Supreme Court in an article in the North American

Review not long ago. "Once established, it is all but impossible to dislodge them . . . Within their fields they are supreme and not subject to Constitutional limitations."

Once established they hold on, because it always is much easier to add to, than to take from, government. Patronage and other factors on their side always stand in the way of dislodgment. They are in positions of great advantage in seeking added power and funds with which to exercise it. For they can use facilities provided for other purposes in maintaining propaganda with that in view. The chief propaganda behind a recent proposal to amend the Constitution came from a government bureau whose powers would have been expanded tremendously, had the effort succeeded in the state legislatures as it did in Congress. Many laws now on the federal statute books—and not all of them are bad ones—are the product essentially of propaganda put over at the expense of the general taxpayer. This is like using the funds of a prospective buyer in carrying on a campaign to sell him something. Carried to the ultimate, it will mean that government shall be only what the bureaus want; government would be maintained for them, rather than for the public.

The bureaus on the whole, and singly, do a great deal of excellent work; most of it no doubt is excellent. You find in them the highest average, if not the finest examples, of efficiency in the government.

The problem, however, transcends what they do or how they do it. The problem involves base principles of far-reaching importance—the separation of the powers of government; the maintenance of a system of checks and balances; the fixing of responsibility; the ability of the people to bring about changes when needed; and, above all, the sustaining of a feeling among citizens that the government is theirs.

## PHYSICIANS, POETS, AND SUICIDES

By JAMES J. WALSH

MISS AMY LOWELL'S John Keats provided me, as a physician, with one of the most surprising passages that I recall in recent literature. In it the New England biographer evidently assumes the position that Keats's physician should have allowed him to do away with himself and not have asked him to stand the suffering that he had to go through in the terminal course of his disease. I have been astonished that no one has taken exception to the passage in question. I have seen it quoted several times by critics—but never in deprecation. Miss Lowell is very emphatic in the expression of her feelings with regard to the physician's action in the matter. She goes so far as to say—"One cannot read of the taking away of laudanum which would have

spared the dying man his horrible lingering torture without a feeling of rage." She does not mean by this expression that the doctor refused to prescribe an opiate in order to make whatever pain Keats may have had to suffer less than it would otherwise have been. It was a medical custom a hundred years ago, to employ opium rather freely in all these chronic cases involving coughs.

What Miss Lowell objects to, is the refusal of the doctor to permit the poet to have the drug so as to take enough of it to put an end to existence. Miss Lowell asks very pertinently in this regard, "Who were Severn [Keats's friend] and Dr. Clark [the attending physician] to determine whether or not Keats had a right to do away with himself under the circum-

stances?" She adds so as to make perfectly clear the position which she herself takes in the matter, "Suicide to hasten painful death did not figure itself to Keats as a crime; it did to the orthodox and unimaginative men in charge of him." Miss Lowell had no hesitation at all in following out her thought to its logical conclusion. If Keats, the sick animal, wanted to do away with himself, why should he not be allowed to do so rather than have to suffer? Hence her summary of the situation. "The mercy accorded to a dog was denied to Keats in the name of religion. It is a ghastly comment on pushing a thing to its verge." Here is the animal nature of man asserted as including the right to put himself out of existence whenever he feels that there is nothing more in life for him. Since man dies as the animal and is no more, why should he spend the ultimate days of existence in pain? Why not take his quietus with a bare bodkin or with the much less painful morphine needle or draught of laudanum and be through with it all? Why should one "fardels bear," "to grunt and sweat under a weary life" when he might just pluck up courage and end it all?

Is it possible that the intellectuals in this country have come to the point where they consider it perfectly proper for a man to take his own life whenever he wants to? Is suicide no more for us than it was for the Romans? Of course so far as Keats's physician was concerned he was bound by the laws of the land in which he lived, and to connive at suicide by allowing a patient who had moments of depression to have laudanum near him with which he might take his life, would have been a serious crime before the law. It is also the law at the present time, and no physician would hesitate for a moment to take away from a patient suffering from mental disease or the terminal stage of any serious disease like cancer or tuberculosis, poison or anything else with which he might take his life. I am quite sure that physicians generally would look upon any yielding of a colleague to the wishes of a patient in a matter like this as utterly unprofessional. Certainly it does not accord with the traditions of the medical profession to have even a silent part in any such action. It would be entirely contrary to the Hippocratic oath, which for so many centuries most physicians took very solemnly before entering upon the practice of their profession.

To anyone who reads even Miss Lowell's life of Keats, the situation will prove to be very different from the one that she has imagined in order to afford herself the opportunity to express her "rage" at the physician and friend who took away the laudanum. The real story seems to have been that Keats had provided himself with the laudanum, thinking that he might use it to alleviate pain, but with the idea of the possibility that he might, when there was no more hope, employ it to end existence. After a time apparently, he came to be afraid that in a moment of

depression he might use it to make away with himself. Therefore he entrusted it to his friend Severn who was so kind to him, and who, it will be recalled, sat up many a night with him and cared for him so faithfully as to have forever a place in the history of literature beside Keats himself. After a time Keats asked to have it given back to him, and Severn refused—but after Keats had pleaded several times feared that some time he might be tempted out of the depth of his friendship to yield to the poet's entreaties. Apparently Keats himself had a little of the feeling that if Severn would but give it back to him he would be more justified in using it for the purpose contemplated because there would be at least tacit approval of his proposed action. Lest he should yield to the temptation, Severn handed over the laudanum to Dr. Clark and then there was no more question of its getting into Keats's possession.

We learn from Miss Lowell herself that after this incident of the laudanum, Keats had many hours of joy in life and thoroughly rejoiced in them. She tells us that Severn read to him out of Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying* and that Keats listened with patience, if not with interest to it. Probably no book in English could have been more suitable for the long drawn out last moments of the young English poet than the latter particularly. Bishop Huber, himself a poet, dwelt on the delicate beauty of Jeremy Taylor's work. Mr. Henry Morley in his introduction to the *Holy Dying* declared that, "There is no memento mori more inspiring than this music of the soul arranged in thoughts and words that will themselves run into music." Miss Lowell treats more than a little scoffingly the idea of Keats's finding any consolation in such reading as this, and regrets poignantly that he was not allowed to use the laudanum rather than have to stand those last months of life. Medical experience is that there is very little pain as a rule in the terminal stages of consumption, but only increasing weakness and occasional fits of depression in which patients suffer much more mentally than they do physically. Anyone who reads the story of Keats's last days is sure to conclude that his case followed the general rule in the matter.

I hope that Miss Lowell's point of view has not come to be the accepted opinion in this matter in New England. I fear that such views are ever so much more common than they used to be. Hence the great increase in the suicide rate in this country, which has more than doubled in the last twenty-five years. The victims are not usually the chronically ill—it is extremely rare to hear of suicide in cancer patients, though nearly a hundred thousand of them die every year in this country and many of them have to stand severe physical suffering. Suicide is much more common among those who suffer mentally, and who have near them the means of putting an end to existence on impulse without much ado. Army officers and physicians



are unfortunately more frequent victims than members of other professions because of this fact. An unexpected disappointment, a disillusionment in love, a refusal in courtship, a setback in business—none of which is serious in itself—will often prove the immediate occasion for suicide in our time, now that loose ideas with regard to human responsibility and the necessity for facing hardship, and even pain, are abroad.

Physicians who are particularly interested in the treatment of tuberculosis and who have, as the result of their efforts, witnessed the reduction of the death rate from this white plague by more than one-half, so that it is no longer "the captain of the men of death," would not like to think that Miss Lowell's opinion as regards easy suicide for the tuberculous was gaining ground. That would take away one of the most efficient auxiliaries that we have for the cure of the disease. A commonly accepted axiom among specialists in tuberculosis is that "tuberculosis takes only the quitters." That is to say, consumption so dreaded a generation ago—and rightly—proves fatal only to those who give up and have not the strength of mind and will to do what they are told and face courageously the struggle that must be made. There are any number of examples of patients given up by physicians who did not give up themselves, and struggled through years of usefulness and helpful service to others. The three men to whom perhaps we owe more in this country for the improvement of conditions which surround the tuberculous, and who are more responsible for the reduction of the death rate than any others, Doctors Trudeau, Biggs and Flick, were all sufferers from

tuberculosis, given up as hopeless cases—yet they lived to do nearly half a century of good work after that verdict against them, and accomplished so much for the benefit of their fellow sufferers from the disease, that their names are not likely to be forgotten for many generations. If they had been the kind of men who got discouraged easily, like Keats, they might have thought of ending their sufferings and above all their torment of mind, and if Miss Lowell's opinion were to be taken, their friends and physicians should have allowed them to do this.

As a physician I dislike to think of the effect that would be produced on young tuberculous patients if this doctrine of the right to put an end to life whenever you felt that existence held nothing further for you were to be accepted as the philosophy of life. If the physicians of Keats's time had come to any such conclusion and had either helped their patients by request, or had winked at their helping themselves to the means whereby they might have had a painless death, the outlook with regard to tuberculosis would be very different from what it is at the present time. They gave up the prescribing of opium as a solace for the tuberculous to a very great extent, asked their patients to see the thing through, and the result is a magnificent advance in medicine, which is saving the lives of literally tens of thousands of people every year in this country alone. Many a man as depressed as Keats, and apparently as hopeless, has, under the inspiration of this mode of treatment, pushed through to years of usefulness. The philosophy of courage—not of despair—always lifts humanity up, and enables it to accomplish much more than seems possible.

## FOUR GREAT RUSSIANS

By JOHN AYSCOUGH

WHEN Peter the Great built St. Petersburg he said he was opening a window into Europe. Gogol, Turgeniev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky opened the greatest windows that we have into Russia. The Russia that they described is buried, though perhaps it is not really dead. It may yet stretch its enormous bulk and cast away its foul and bloody grave-clothes.

At all events, the Russia of those four masters has disappeared behind the red dark. Their work is not the less interesting, and would not be, even if the disappearance should be final. It would remain a portentous monument four-square; Gogol's side the most uncouth, but not the least striking; Turgeniev's the most ornamental and most adorned, but not the most definite—indeed, the least national and the least powerful; Tolstoy's the most eulogized, perhaps the most renowned, but not the greatest or the strongest; Dostoevsky's, by all means, the most passionately

truthful, sincere, and pathetic, if also at the same time the most terrible.

Of these four architects of the great monument, Turgeniev was the least Russian: he had lived in the light of common day outside, and he wrote from memory; into his memories shone gleams of a western sun. His pen was half-civilized, and that gain was a loss to him. One meets in his books characters that one might meet in a French novel—though it would be one of the finest and best of the French novels. He had ideas of beauty less Russian than western, and his absence tempered his pictures; he desired that they should please, and a certain haze of gentleness softens their definition. They are incomparably less massive, less prepotent, than Gogol's or Dostoevsky's, and are weakened by their graciousness. There was nothing gracious about Gogol's pictures; he painted brutally and did not shrink from their brutality, or dream of making it please. The truth he saw was vastly ugly,

and he was only concerned in showing it vast and true. He did not write of civilized persons, and did not himself pose as a civilized writer. He stripped himself and his characters to the shirt, and gave the latter no pose and no quarter. He was not afraid of saying disgusting things if saying them conveyed the absolute portrait he wanted. He knew his own strength and power, and was determined to let it take its own unfettered way. For canons of art he did not care—he was like a man who has found out how to paint and is indifferent whether other artists consider him an artist or no. He knew how to make pictures and where to look for them. It did not matter to him whether anyone liked them, or anyone shrank from them. He knew they were like the original people and the original places. He was incomparably stronger as a writer than was Caravaggio as a painter. Caravaggio only discarded tradition in treatment.

Gogol discarded all tradition as to theme and inspiration. He was a very great writer and a very great humanist, though at no pains to seem humane. He followed no school and has no self-confessed scholars, though neither Tolstoy nor Dostoevsky (nor even Turgeniev) would have been themselves had he not been himself before them. In greatness neither Tolstoy nor Turgeniev approached him—Dostoevsky reached heights far above him, but could not rival his huge sanity.

Gogol seized his pen in the dark and wrote before the day. Dostoevsky wrote in a very chill dawn, his eyes always turned wistfully to a sun that he longed for and prayed for with infinite groanings—which never rose. Tolstoy fancied it had risen, but was particularly in need of his own assistance to mount the heavens. His earliest work is worth more than his later because it is less self-conscious. Heine says that every woman writer writes with one eye on the public and one eye fixed on some man, "except Countess Hahn-Hahn, who has only one eye." Tolstoy's earlier work was written with one eye fixed on Russia and the other on posterity; in his later work the one eye was fastened more upon the world than upon Russia, and the other eye steadfastly rested, in deep and respectful appreciation, upon himself. The more he became a prophet and a preacher, the less did he become as a master of Russian literature. No doubt he meant nobly; his life and his work were paved with good intentions. He became, after *War and Peace*, and *Anna Karenina*, less purely Russian. His mission, as he fashioned it, was world-wide, and he fell from being a great national to being a cosmopolitan with great purposes. Probably no one loses more in becoming, or trying to become, cosmopolitan, than a Russian. If he succeeds, as he rarely does, there is nothing left that matters. When a Russian of old time had any willingness to unnationalize himself, it was mostly to make himself as French as he could, and the result was hardly more than a *petit-maitre*.

Tolstoy was too great by far for that: he could only be great, but he began as a great master of Russian literature and ended as a great nebula in the undiscovered constellation of theory.

It will be seen that the present writer, though aware of the commonly accepted belief that Tolstoy was the greatest of the Russians, does not hold it. Turgeniev seemed less great—chiefly because he was much more modest and claimed less. But he had, what was an uncovenanted mercy in a Russian master, an incomparable charm—to which Tolstoy could never have attained no matter how hard he tried. He had not Tolstoy's brute force, but Tolstoy had not a tithe of the brute force of Gogol; nor had Tolstoy more than a shadow of Gogol's simplicity (in his later work none of it) nor quarter of Gogol's huge clarity of vision and faithful sincerity of utterance.

Gogol had no more sentimentality than an earthquake. Turgeniev may seem more feminine than Tolstoy, but he was far less sentimental—and of sentimentality that smells mawkishly he is entirely free. He can be sad as well as pathetic, but his sadness is not morbid; he is affectionate but never gushing; he has great pity, but he does not drivel over the people he compassionates. He wrote largely of a given period, but his work was not temporary, and will undoubtedly survive. It never was simply topical, and cannot become old-fashioned. His theme was not really nihilism, but human beings—and every one of them lives, and will continue to live, because they are not characters in a dramatized thesis, but women and men only touched on the shoulder by the passing theory of their day. They lived to love and weep, and laugh when excuse was given them. Tolstoy's characters, after his prophet's mantle fell upon him, lived to preach and were his own creatures.

Turgeniev did not create his men and women—God had done that. He only showed them, with singular verity and gentleness, and respect and understanding. He loved mankind rather than any social theories, and derived his hope for men, not from what men might set out to do for them, but from memory, from remembering whence man came and from whose Hand, what He had done for men and what He must still be willing to do.

I have heard it said that Turgeniev is less manly than Tolstoy—the only truth in that is that he is more feminine. It is a vulgarity and obtuseness of criticism to think that a master in whom a certain feminism of delicate quality shows is effeminate. Shakespeare has it—was anyone ever manlier? Robert Browning has it—was any poet ever more masculine? Yet without that feminism he could never have achieved the miracle of *Pompilia*.

How few great women writers have completely succeeded in giving us first-rate male characters; how few great male writers have given us quite first-rate heroines. Neither Dickens nor Thackeray succeeded,



though the much under-valued Anthony Trollope did succeed. George Eliot's heroes are much less manly than her heroines. Charlotte Brontë's principal hero was an improper old maid, her other heroes, male governesses. Thackeray's heroines were apt to be mere crying-machines with babies. But no woman could have made truer women than Shakespeare or Browning—only Shakespeare did it over and over again, and Browning's supreme success occurred but once.

Turgenev's feminism was not only, or chiefly, instanced in his appreciation of his women, but in his maternity towards all his children. Tolstoy was not even paternal; his attitude was more that of a school-master who stands only in loco parentis towards his boys. Tolstoy and Turgenev have this in common, that both read perfectly in French. Gogol does not, though there are passages in Balzac that nearly remind one of him. Dostoevsky is immeasurably better read in English than in French.

All the four Russian masters here dealt with were children of the Russian church—though one at least of them was an unsubmitive son of hers. It tinged them all, and unfortunately. What they would have been had they been Catholics, is about as profitable an enquiry as asking what turn history would have taken if Sixtus V, instead of becoming friar and Pope, had married Elizabeth Tudor. Yet it is hard to abstain from wondering—at all events, in the case of Dostoevsky, who happened to detest the Catholic Church, and kept two immense bees in his bonnet, that really troubled him terribly—the Jesuits and the Inquisition. There can be no doubt that if he had been a Catholic, his misery would have been less abysmal—perhaps he might even have been happy, and for so great and heroic a soul one must long that he might have been happier. It is hard to imagine a human being less selfish, more completely devoid of prejudice founded on self-love. A martyr of life, he had neither rancor nor grudge against those who inflicted the martyrdom. He seems even to hold them blameless and to think them not much in the wrong from their point of view. In all the appalling tragedy of his *House of the Dead*, which is the biography of his years in Siberia, there is no abuse of the government for sending him there—not a single outcry against its cruelty. His colossal charity reaches to them, as it covers the hideous, bestial, treacherous, malignant criminals whose companion he had to be at bed and board and toil during those intolerable years of anguish. I said intolerable, yet he bore it, and without complaint. He was legally dead, and much worse than dead in all else. He remained sane enough to know that he was not in hell. With hope he never trifled. So far as he knew, there was no hope but death, yet he never spread out morbid, wooing arms to death, or sought, or even wished, to die. He bore. The heroism of every waking moment of those foul and loathsome years was stupendous,

and, to read of, blinding. The man was incurably a believer in God and in man: he loved both in spite of, nay wholly uninfluenced by, what God had laid upon him, and in spite of all experience of his fellow-men. He deserved the crowns of martyrdom and of sanctity. Had he been a Catholic he must have received upon his dead brow the Church's brand of sanctity; and I must think him a saint of the wilderness as it was, though his faith was awry, and he bore, ignorantly, false witness against much that we revere and believe. Our Lord may have forgiven long ago those who bore false witness against Himself—He did not damn those who struck Him upon the mouth, but asked—"Why?"

Let any Catholic read that *House of the Dead* and he must pray for the soul of the patient sufferer who wrote it, and wish that the man, so pure in that sink of foulness, had been, for his comfort, a Catholic, too. There was in him no guile, as there was no malice or spite. He was unspeakably humble. The poignancy of the book is cutting, unbearable. There is not one line in it dictated by self-pity, nor a line inspired by the longing for revenge on those who sent him into that hell for those stolen years of his life. Ranging himself alongside the real criminals who were his companions, he casts upon himself no eye of complacency or pride, on them no glance of scorn or loathing. They were as much the sons of God and of suffering as himself. It never once occurred to him that they mattered less, that what they were was less to God than what he was, that their suffering belonged merely to the inevitable bulk of the world's sufferance, while his own was a thing special, monstrous, and scandalous, demanding Divine attention and interference.

Probably everyone knows how he came to be in a felon's prison in Siberia. Born in 1821, in a hospital for the poor at Moscow, of which his father was a resident surgeon, his first novel, *Poor Folk*, was written when he was twenty-three. In April of 1849 he was arrested with forty-three others, his crime being complicity in a sort of debating club of advanced opinions. His own opinions do not seem to have been by any means revolutionary. After many months of imprisonment he was, with a score of others, condemned to death. It was the middle of the Russian winter. The windows of the vehicles in which they were driven to Semyonovski Square were sheeted with ice, and he could not see anything outside. In the middle of the square was a scaffold, up to which the condemned were marched and ranged in two lines and stripped to the shirt. A sheriff read, and re-read for each of them, the sentence of death, to be carried out there and then. Dostoevsky whispered to his next neighbor—"It is impossible they can mean to kill us." For answer the man pointed to a row of coffins near the scaffold. A priest mounted the scaffold and asked if any wished to confess their sins. "Only one," says Dostoevsky, "accepted the invitation." No one can doubt that it

was himself. Petroschevsky, the leader, and two others were already tied to the poles, their heads muffled in a sort of bag, and the soldiers stood ready, awaiting the word of command to fire. . . . Presently there came a stir, but Dostoevsky was too near-sighted to see quickly what was happening. He was gazing at the glitter of a gilded church dome that an early sunbeam had caught, and thinking—"I shall be in five minutes where that light comes from." An officer came galloping across the square waving a white handkerchief—he was sent by the Emperor with a pardon for all the condemned. It had never been intended to carry out the death sentence, but by it to teach a lesson never to be forgotten. One of the three tied to the poles had gone mad and remained mad. For twenty minutes all had been freezing in their shirts in the excruciating cold. Dostoevsky, years afterwards, said he had no recollection of feeling it. His sentence was commuted to eight years in a Siberian convict prison, and many years subsequent exile in Siberia as a soldier. He actually served four years in prison, and two years later was allowed to return from Siberia. He lived for a quarter of a century, suffering many things. He was an epileptic, and was in chronic poverty and debt. Forty thousand compatriots followed him to the grave. We do not learn that they had lightened his load of debt while he lived. It is much less troublesome to cast flowers upon a coffin.

His work is incomparably greater than that of any of his compatriots. The House of the Dead is not reckoned his masterpiece, but it would have been the masterpiece of any other author. It is, in fact, a monument, and stands apart sublimely lonely and great.

The novel commonly ranked as his masterpiece is *Crime and Punishment*, but I do not think it greater than *The Idiot*. Of those books and *The Brothers Karamazov* I do not propose to speak here, limitation of space forbidding, nor of any of his many other novels and stories. Space, indeed, forbids here anything beyond a quite general allusion to his work. I cannot now attempt to speak of his genius and its quality—it will be seen that in these few lines I have been more occupied with the man than with his achievement as a writer. As a man, his dumb appeal to our measureless pity is overwhelming. I do not believe his great works to be either morbid or unwholesome, but they might have an effect unwholesome and morbid upon a youthful reader succumbing to their singular and melancholy power, precisely because this great writer and great humanist was not a Catholic, and was born disinherited of that wholesightedness that comes from looking at life through the Church's urbanely steady eyes. He saw much, but there is more to see than his loving and sorrowful eyes ever saw. He is not, like Shakespeare, complete. He saw nothing outside Russia, and was so sodden with her pain as to seem unaware that beyond her frontiers there were happier lives.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### WORKING TOWARD PEACE

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor:—Father Haldi's Appeal to American Catholics in a recent issue of *The Commonwealth*, and your editorial comment upon it, ought to call forth some responsive action. It is not necessary to accept all the statements and inferences contained in his letter. All thoughtful Catholics will readily admit that it is their duty to work and pray for peace, though they may honestly doubt the efficacy of some agencies which assert a sort of proprietorship of the cause.

The initiative for peace was taken during the war by the Holy Father, who is the representative on earth of the Prince of Peace. I refer to his action in ordering every priest in the world to read in the daily Mass the prayer for peace, and calling upon all his children to join in that prayer.

This prayer should be the main feature of any peace program; a program not to be confined to our leaders, intellectual or spiritual. Our aim should be to try to get all Catholics upon their knees asking God to grant peace to the nations. Was it Saint Ignatius or Saint Francis Xavier who said—"Work as if all depends upon you and pray as if all depends upon God?" Moreover there could be no finer form of coöperation with non-Catholic peace agencies than inducing them to adopt the Catholic ideal expressed in the motto "*Laborare et Orare*," but mere words will not accomplish this.

Omission to invoke the Divine blessing at the Peace Conference of Versailles, an omission alleged to have been deliberate—by common report, prayer was suggested, but sneered at—gives added sting to the bitter satire of an old saying, that the next war is always made at the last peace table.

We can all work unitedly for what Cardinal Bourne calls "a body of solidly informed Catholic opinion, with a true conception of what the relations between nations ought to be." Once that has been achieved it should not be difficult to find many ways to broadcast the Catholic position. Ought we to risk the destruction of Catholic unity on the main issue, by running our ship too near the rocks and shoals of divided political opinions? Is it necessary to take such a chance?

CHRISTOPHER I. FITZ GERALD.

### AGAINST EAR-PULLING

Wawa, Pa.

TO the Editor:—Some time ago, in your columns, I ventured the opinion concerning Germans in general (having lived and studied in Germany for years) that they are more deeply rooted in antiquity than any nation except the Chinese (among whom I have also lived for years)—a remark which evoked surprisingly wrathful disagreement at the time. From whatever cause, it seems to have rankled, for your recent issue carries an article on Bishop von Ketteler beginning with an allusion to that remark, and adding that holders of that opinion "have been sufficiently scolded and taken by the ears." That seems a strange phrase to use between gentlemen. I have no possible objection to disagreement, even from theorists. I know nothing of the particular disputes to which your writer refers, and am not interested in imported racial antagonisms, except inasmuch as they are a nuisance to Americans. I do disapprove of this suggestion of "ear-pulling." It seems to me to be a vulgarity unworthy of your announced standard.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.



## THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

*The Grand Street Follies*

AMONG the four most important annual events of the theatrical season, the opening night of the Grand Street Follies is surely the most amusing. The other three events are, of course, the season's opening production of the Theatre Guild, for serious drama, a complete new edition of the Ziegfeld Follies, for superlative tinsel, and the leading revival staged by the Actors' Theatre, for consummate directing and ensemble acting. Unlike most other important events, the Grand Street Follies comes at the close of the season and is a delectable summing up and restatement of the season itself in terms of a deliciously pungent burlesque.

If you don't believe that an event taking place in so far off a section of New York can have this importance, simply read the exclamations of joy and delight of the critics in the daily papers every time a new edition of the annual follies appears on Grand Street. As I have often pointed out, there is probably more genuine talent and near genius housed under the roof of the Neighborhood Playhouse than in any other one spot in New York. The commercial managers know this and envy the fact but can do nothing about it. They have made offers to some of the Grand Street luminaries fabulously larger than the salaries they are now receiving. But you have failed to catch the moving spirit of the Grand Street organization, if you think that its best actors can be weaned away by the mere argument of salary. Their artistry is too real for that. They enjoy too much the feeling of working in a large family group, or finding an ever varied expression for their versatile talents. You will find the star performer of one play cheerfully carrying a spear in the chorus of the next play. But he or she will carry that spear with an enthusiasm and an attention to detail and to movement and to general effect, which makes this very simple act a work of art. No one in Grand Street is in danger of getting cast "in type." In this way every actor has his chance at both comedy and tragedy, at burlesque and at satire, and when the season is over he knows that the only limit to his success is the limit of his own ability.

This year, for example, Miss Paula Trueman, who has been happily content with small parts in *The Little Clay Cart* and *The Critic*, suddenly finds herself able to enter with astonishing certitude into the spirit of Helen Hayes as Cleopatra, and Lillian Gish in *Romola*. Miss Dorothy Sands has, of course, fared better during this last season. In her double rôle of Mrs. Dangle and Tilburnina's companion in *The Critic*, and in the totally different rôle of the neurotic friend in *Exiles*, she has already amply convinced us of her astonishingly fine and varied art. In the present Follies, however, she places the seal of perfection on her own work by an amazingly fine impersonation of Pauline Lord.

Among the men of the Grand Street company, there is never any question of the supremacy of Albert Carroll. His art always glows with a rare beauty and finish. His female impersonations have become classic in New York theatrical annals. This year by way of convincing variety he becomes at one minute Joseph Schildkraut in *The Firebrand*, at another the denatured Sergeant Quirk of *What Price Glory*; to be followed by a transformation into Miss Lynne Fontanne in *The Guardsman*, Anna Pavlova in her *Swan Dance* and last

but not least the dark skinned Florence Mills presiding over a Harlem cabaret. You lose all sense that Albert Carroll is imitating the object of his satire. He literally becomes that person and his burlesque, instead of detracting, only heightens the outline after the fashion of a master of caricature.

But aside from Albert Carroll, the Neighborhood has furnished another delightful surprise in the work of Mr. Marc Loebell. Mr. Loebell has shown decided talent throughout the year but it is only now for the first time that we know him as a character actor of real importance. His study of Morris Gest, in subtlety of gesture, facial expression and make up, is one of the most complete and effective transformations I have seen this year.

To do complete justice to the actual work of individuals would demand a long catalogue of names. When Mr. Otto Hulcius takes off Alfred Lunt in *The Guardsman* or Mr. Scott brings George Arliss back to life as Old English, or when Miss Vera Allen actually becomes Mary Morris in *Desire Under the Elms*, you are at a loss when to stop pointing out individual performances of the highest merit. The crowning point of the evening is, of course, the rendition of Abie's Irish Rose as an Italian grand opera. Here Mr. Scott steps from his Old English into the splendor of a Mordkin dance and Miss Lily Lubell becomes a most persuasive Gallie Curci interpreting Mrs. Cohen. Perhaps the statement that this gala operatic performance with an all star cast is in honor "of the consolidation of the Irish Free State and Palestine" will best indicate the bubbles of mirth pervading this number.

Some of the other numbers are not quite so happy in their avoidance of the painful double meaning joke and other easy roads to laughter. There are moments when even this high burlesque falls with a flop into the idiom and the appeal of Broadway; but for the most part material of this sort is handled only for the purpose of turning it to healthy ridicule. It is seldom that Grand Street commits an unpleasantness for its own sake. It is in this fact that I find it distinctly different in atmosphere from the Garrick Gaieties where a cheap sophistication was so often put forth.

*When Choosing Your Plays*

- Aloma of the South Seas*—A grotesque and uninteresting play.
- Cesar and Cleopatra*—A splendid production scenically, but unevenly acted.
- Desire Under the Elms*—Eugene O'Neill at his most morbid repast.
- Is Zat So?*—The triumph of two characters and a very human theme over a poor plot. A splendid comedy.
- Tell Me More!*—A Gershwin score—praise enough.
- The Fall Guy*—A good comedy of the slumming type.
- The Garrick Gaieties*—A new review by the junior Guild members.
- The Gorilla*—An entertaining piece of melodramatic hokum.
- The Poor Nut*—An amusing summer evening's entertainment.
- The Student Prince*—One of the best of the musical plays.
- They Knew What They Wanted*—A play with a tragic beginning and a fine ending.
- What Price Glory*—A very fine, though not a great play.
- White Cargo*—A morbid story of the white man's degeneration in the tropics. Mostly unrelieved gloom.

## BOOKS

*The Man Nobody Knows*, by Bruce Barton. New York: The Bobbs Merrill Company. \$2.50.

AS an attempt to present Jesus Christ "as you find Him in the gospels," and "freed from the feminizing influence [sic] of the early Church," Mr. Bruce Barton's recent work, *The Man Nobody Knows*, is worthless—less than worthless, for, besides its utter failure in this respect, it invests the Savior with an exaggerated business shrewdness at the expense of His great and charming dignity. But it is a frank, if unconscious, revelation of certain convergent tendencies in religion and business—tendencies which are now gaining considerable headway, and which can be called peculiarly American. For this reason *The Man Nobody Knows* demands notice; otherwise it could be dismissed as a piece of indelicate claptrap unworthy of mention.

Various religious interests have adopted modern sales methods as a stimulus to church attendance; sensational newspaper publicity is sought, ballyhooing from the pulpit is not uncommon, and towering buildings are planned which shall house both the cloak-and-suit trade and the worship of God. On the other hand, we see in business—big business—a rapidly growing, pseudo-religious movement which has as its keynote and battle-cry, service. This word, fostered by the advertising geniuses and by such organizations as the Rotary Club, has within the last few years come to mean something awesome and holy. It is now widely touted as the *spiritus sanctus* of modern trade—as the be-all and end-all both of business and of life itself. It comes as no surprise, then, to be told by the service-shouters that the debt of mankind to great corporations and their builders is not only material but spiritual. Mr. Barton goes even farther. He holds that service is a direct outcome of the teachings of Jesus, that business has but comparatively recently "woke up to a great discovery" of this fact, which is "emblazoned in the advertising pages of every magazine." For, "It was not to preach that He came into the world; nor to teach; nor heal," but to spread this Rotarian fetishism of service!

An astounding book. It is hardly credible that anyone should write a burlesque of the life of Jesus Christ, yet Mr. Barton has done so. True, his offense is unintentional. Doubtless his rather obsessional conviction that salesmanship is indispensable to greatness has led him to depict Christ as a salesman. "Surely," he continues, "no one will consider us lacking in reverence if we say that every one of the 'principles of modern salesmanship' on which business men so much pride themselves, are brilliantly exemplified in Jesus's talk and work." Surely one will, Mr. Barton! A great many people, whatever their religion or lack of it, will consider that such handling of a sacred theme is grossly irreverent, that to call Jesus Christ "the great advertiser of His own day" is profane, and that to refer to Him as "the founder of modern business" and as having "proved His right to be the silent partner in every modern business, to sit at the head of every directors' table"—is poisonous nonsense.

Another serious count against the author is his habit of distorting history to suit his own purposes, as in the following passage referring to the forms of worship which existed at the advent of Moses—"The world was full of gods in his day—male gods, female gods, wooden and iron gods—it was a poverty stricken tribe that could not boast of a hundred at

least." The first part of this sentence is as true today, in the general sense employed by the author, as it was in the time of Moses—the last part was as false then, as it is now. Israel, for one, had no "hundred at least." He goes on—"The human mind had never been able to leap beyond the idea that every natural phenomenon was the expression of a different deity." Even a casual acquaintance with the history of religions is enough to discredit this, and again we can cite the Israelites as the most convenient example.

These brave but mistaken invasions of unfamiliar fields are typical of Mr. Barton's general recklessness where facts are concerned. With the utmost assurance he tosses off half-truths and wholly specious generalizations for the simple reason, apparently, that they fit in with his contentions. Thus, in attempting to prove that Jesus possessed virile attraction for women, a matter of doubtful importance at best, he says—"The men who have been women's men in the finest sense, have been the vital, commanding figures of history." Napoleon? Frederick the Great? Henry VIII? Besides many such statements as the above, there is an abundance of utterances which can be described only as Bartonisms, and which testify to the author's zeal rather than to his store of knowledge. As—"Theology has spoiled the thrill of His life by assuming that He knew everything from the beginning . . ." Theology, Mr. Barton might consider, has at least given us a God—and a drummer is a poor substitute.

Again—"The Church has attached to each of the disciples the title of saint and thereby done most to destroy the conviction of their reality." Last—"Great progress will be made in the world when we rid ourselves of the idea that there is a difference between work and religious work." And—there you are!

However, there are bright spots in the book—bright, amusing spots. The early prophets are described as "not the kind of men whom you would choose as companions on a fishing trip." As for the disciples: "What a list! Not a single well-known person on it. Nobody who had ever made a success of anything. What a crowd!" Judas was "hard-boiled." Paul is pictured as entering Athens on foot "because he had no car fare."

Strangely enough, the last chapter is rather well done. The author abandons, for the most part, his "inspirational" twaddle, his anecdotes about big men and their big ideas, his wall-motto philosophy, his breezy, too-familiar literary style—and, best of all, his irritating generalizations. The result is a composition of some literary skill and genuine feeling for the subject. But it can not atone for the vulgarity of the preceding chapters, of almost every preceding page. The impression of Jesus Christ bullying a sick man into standing on his feet and afterward chuckling to Himself at the success of the hocus-pocus, the impression of Him as "selling" his doctrines to "prospective believers" by "putting Himself in touch with his prospects"—these impressions still remain, and they are not pleasant ones to carry away. They become even more unpleasant when one reflects that Mr. Barton is but the spokesman of a new (to coin a terrible word) religio-business movement—that his book is but a manifestation of something of far more consequence than itself.

"A wholly sincere and reverent effort," says the advertisement on the cover. Sincere? Yes, we may grant that. Mr. Barton is sincere. So was Robert Reidt, the Long Island Apostle of Doom.

JAMES L. DWYER.



## BRIEFER MENTION

*Fifteen Hundred Years of Europe*, by Julius E. De Vos. Chicago: The O'Donnell Press. \$2.50.

THE study of the history of Europe is interesting to Americans, as it is the land of their origin, and the mother of their culture. In his fair and generous book, Father Julius E. De Vos has methodically separated the statistical features from predominant factors. Details, dates and names are arranged into tables, charts and chronicles, which tell in a few words and signs all that is essential to understand, and which are to history what maps are to geography. The succession of the main events is sketched broadly in text untrammelled by details; there are, moreover, monographs of the principal events, and personages, with the main characteristics of every people and every epoch. So the student of history may grasp at once the past of Europe. To give a clear and comprehensive compendium of 1,500 years of Europe's history in a single volume of less than 600 pages is an achievement in itself. One marvels at the vast amount of data and information collected here—but when we reflect that fifty years of study and labor have gone into the writing of this single volume, wonder changes to respect.

*The Races of Man*, by A. C. Haddon. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

IN these days all sorts of people, some of them knowing very little about the subject, talk about ethnology. They do not all call it that, nor do all perhaps know exactly what is meant by that term. But they are interested, quite properly in immigration and they have got it into their heads that it is "the right thing" to be a nordic, and so they are sure that whatever nordics are, they themselves, at any rate, are nordics. To anyone who wants information on the subject, this little book will be of great value and though other ethnologists may differ from him in some of his opinions, notably for example, as to the origin of the Celts and the ancient Greeks, no one who knows Doctor Haddon's work will refuse him the meed of being a cautious writer, careful of his facts, and averse to the wild-cat speculations dear to some writers on both sides of the Atlantic. The book is not one to be read through, perhaps, but most certainly one to have in one's near-at-hand reference shelves, since it contains accounts of all, or nearly all, the known races with the characteristics of each, and is illustrated by quite excellent pictures.

*Admiral de Grasse*, by Canon Max Caron. Boston: The Four Seas Company. \$2.50.

IT was an excellent thought of the translators, Dr. Mathilde Masse and the Marquis d'Andelarre, to give in English an edition of the charming little study on Washington's confrère at the Battle of Yorktown, from which we may date our American liberties, written by Canon Caron, former Superior of the Versailles Petit Séminaire. The life of this very admirable French nobleman, a true gentleman and fervent Catholic, will be a welcome story on the shelves of our heroes of the American Revolution, the last words of which remain, it seems, still to be spoken. The spirit aroused in France and America by the world war is strong in these pages, which should be placed prominently in our public libraries.

## THE QUIET CORNER

*I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library.*—C. LAMB.

Dr. Angelicus thrust the last page of the Sunday paper away from him, with the sigh of one who had done his duty well.

"Read through from beginning to end," he announced impressively.

"You are so conscientious, Doctor," murmured Miss Anonymoncule. "I know that you really dislike reading the newspapers."

"Not any longer," replied the Doctor, searching his pocket and pulling forth a collection of clippings. "I have discovered that my former aversion to them was entirely unjustified. I now impatiently and feverishly await the arrival of my morning paper. I find that the daily press gives me the most stimulating ideas—ideas many of which I am planning to make the theme of a great American saga, which I expect to write some day."

"Is that what you are saving those clippings for?" asked Miss Anonymoncule.

"Exactly. For instance, here is a cutting from the Evening World of recent date which sketches the life of Amelia Jenks Bloomer—the lady who invented bloomers, and gave them their significant name and place of importance in American life. Now what fascinates me most about Mrs. Bloomer is the gorgeous assembly of picturesque names that surrounds her personality. There is food for an epic in these names," went on the Doctor enthusiastically. "To begin with, we have first her father—Ananias Jenks. Ponder on the poetic euphony of that name. His infant daughter, later to contribute so much to the welfare of her sex with the famous invention of bloomers, was christened Amelia—a name of fitting dignity for such a pioneer. Amelia, on growing to womanhood, fell in love with, and married Mr. Bloomer. Thus we arrive at the impressive nomenclature—Amelia Jenks Bloomer. Now just think—if Longfellow was able to do so much with Hiawatha, what poetry may I not be able to weave around the name of Amelia Jenks Bloomer. That even in bloomers, there is poetry, is evidenced by the name that Mrs. Bloomer gave to the paper she inaugurated and edited, which she called The Lily. It was devoted to the cause of temperance and women's rights. The World goes on to say of her—'and yet she expressed her opinions with a vehemence and lack of restraint which led even her exceedingly eulogistic biographer to write—'Mrs. Bloomer was a great critic and for that reason may not have been so popular with her associates as she might otherwise have been.' What a wealth of meaning lies hidden behind that one simple sentence!"

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"My next clipping, culled from a recent issue of the New York Evening Post," continued Dr. Angelicus, "in an article on Governor Smith and Tammany, states that 'there are several possibilities that may affect the social session of the Legis-

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lature, to be held on June 22.' That particularly intrigues me. I wonder what a social session of the Legislature looks like. I suppose ices and cakes are served, and the legislators sip their tea as they wait for their various bills to be discussed."

\* \* \*

"Yes, the newspaper is indeed a fund of interesting information. I have the greatest admiration for the reporters who go forth and obtain the news. That their spirit is a dauntless one, is proved by a letter I received this morning from Cyril B. Egan."

Dr. Angelicus pulled at another pocket and drew forth a missive, which he held out to Miss Anonymoncule, who read aloud—

"Dear Doctor Angelicus—I am an interview-addict. I love to touch and talk with greatness. Hence my repetitious and stubborn endeavors to connect personally with Jay Ballantyne Bulbull, the celebrated mausoleum magnate. Forty times I endeavored to see the great man at his office or in his home.

"Mr. Bulbull is out,' they told me the first time.

"He's busy,' was the second alibi.

"On a vacation,' the third time.

"In conference . . . in conference . . . in conference' . . . And so on, to my thirty-eighth call.

"Indisposed,' said they then.

"Sick,' said they again . . .

"You can't see him,' they began the last time—

"And why not?' I demanded in a perfect passion of frustrated fury.

"You can't see Mr. Ballantyne Bulbull, because he is dead!"

"The devil I can't!' cried I in glee—and dashed straightway to the Koomaswami Séance Parlors, where, upon the payment of a ten dollar bill—pronto!—they produced the elusive Bulbull right before my very eyes."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

*The Commonweal would greatly appreciate the receipt of copies of numbers 5, 6, and 9, Volume I, from any of its readers who may possess extra copies of these numbers.*

## CONTRIBUTORS

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